

CLAIMS

Please amend the presently pending claims as follows:

1. (Currently Amended) Method of authenticating a telecommunication terminal, called client, for access to at least one virtual network, said client comprising software and, when said software and a predetermined access control protocol for access to said at least one virtual network are compatible, said client being able ~~that allows the client~~ to access the services of at least one service provider via the at least one virtual network, the or each virtual network being set up on a telecommunication network, ~~the method being performed with a data processing arrangement and comprising:~~

~~—determining if a software of the client and a predetermined access control protocol for access to the virtual network are compatible,~~

- wherein an authentication network is set up on said telecommunication network, said if the software of the client and the predetermined access control protocol are not compatible, authorising data transfer between the client and at least one subscription system for subscribing the client to at least one service provider via an authentication network, which is being different from the or each virtual network that allows the client to access the services of the or each service provider,

and wherein said authentication network comprises an address server and at least one subscription system for allowing said client to subscribe to said at least one service provider,

and wherein, when said software and said predetermined access control protocol are not compatible, the method comprises the following steps:

- said address server transmits to the client an address for accessing said at least one subscription system;

- upon reception of said address, the client accesses said at least one subscription system and subscribes to said at least one service provider;

- upon detection of the subscription of the client, said at least one subscription system if

~~the non-compatible client subscribes to at least one service provider via the authentication network, transferring~~ transfers ~~to the non-compatible client;~~

~~-an authentication for accessing the virtual network that allows access to the services of the~~ said at least one ~~service provider to which the non-compatible client is~~ has ~~subscribed;~~

~~-and information which makes it possible to make the software of the client compatible with the predetermined access control protocol.~~

2. (Previously Presented) Method according to Claim 1, wherein the authentication network is a virtual network or a network that is separate from the telecommunication network.

3. (Previously Presented) Method according to Claim 1, wherein the subscription system includes at least one subscription portal, an authentication material server and, in response to the client subscribing to a service, the subscription portal transfers to an authentication server data associated with the authentication transferred to the client.

4. (Previously Presented) Method according to Claim 3, wherein the client is connected to the network via a Digital Subscriber Line Access Multiplexor and, if the client is compatible with the predetermined access control protocol, the Digital Subscriber Line Access Multiplexor performs the steps of obtaining an identifier and a client authentication material and of obtaining a client authentication confirmation from the authentication server.

5. (Previously Presented) Method according to Claim 4, wherein, if the authentication server does not confirm the authentication of the client, the method comprises a step of authorising data transfer between the client and at least one subscription system for subscribing the client to at

least one service provider via an authentication network which is different from the virtual networks which allow a client to access the services of at least one service provider.

6. (Previously Presented) Method according to Claim 3, wherein there is a transfer to the authentication server of information associated with the service provider to which the client is subscribed and/or information characterizing the service to which the client is subscribed.

7. (Previously Presented) Method according to Claim 6, wherein the authentication server additionally transfers to the Digital Subscriber Line Access Multiplexor the information associated with the service provider to which the client is a client and/or the information relating to the service or services to which the client is subscribed.

8. (Previously Presented) Method according to Claim 7, wherein the Digital Subscriber Line Access Multiplexor authorises data transfer between the virtual network that allows the client to access the services of the service provider to which the client is subscribed according to the communication speeds to which the client is subscribed.

9. (Previously Presented) Method according to Claim 1, wherein an address server is also associated with the virtual authentication network, and wherein the address server allocates an address to the client for data transfer on the virtual authentication network.

10. (Previously Presented) Method according to Claim 1, wherein the telecommunication network is a high-speed network based on Ethernet technology, and wherein the predetermined access control protocol is a protocol of the IEEE 802.lx type, and the clients are connected to the Digital Subscriber Line Access Multiplexor via connections of the DSL type.

11. (Currently Amended) System for authenticating a telecommunication terminal, called client, for access to at least one virtual network, said client comprising software, and, when said software and a predetermined access control protocol for access to at least one of said virtual networks are compatible, said client being able for allowing the client to access the services of at least one service provider via the at least one virtual network, the or each virtual network being set up on a telecommunication network, the system comprising:

~~—processing means for determining if a software of the client and a predetermined access control protocol for access to the telecommunication network are compatible;~~

- authorisation means comprising an authentication network set up on said telecommunication network, said authentication network being different from the at least one virtual network and comprising address server means and at least one subscribing means for allowing said client to subscribe to said at least one service provider, wherein, when said software and said predetermined access control protocol are not compatible;

- said address server means transmits to the client an address for accessing said at least one subscribing means; and

- upon reception of said address, the client accesses said at least one subscribing means and subscribes to said at least one service provider;

~~—authorisation means for authorising, if the software of the client and the predetermined access control protocol are not compatible, data transfer between the non-compatible client and at least one subscription system,~~

~~—at least one subscribing means for subscribing the client to at least one service provider via a network which is different from the virtual networks which allow a client to access the services of a service provider, and a~~

- upon detection of the subscription of the client, said at least one subscribing means transfers to said client ~~transfer means for transferring to the non-compatible client, if the non-compatible client subscribes to at least one service provider via the authentication~~

~~network~~, an authentication for accessing ~~the virtual network, which allows access to the~~ services of the at least one service provider to which the ~~non-compatible~~ client is has subscribed and information which makes it possible to make the software of the client compatible with the predetermined access control protocol.

12. (Currently Amended) A computer readable memory having stored thereon a computer program including instructions, which when run by a computer perform a method of authenticating a telecommunication terminal, called client, for access to at least one virtual network, said client comprising software, and, when said software and a predetermined access control protocol for access to at least one of said virtual networks are compatible, said client being able ~~that allows the client~~ to access the services of at least one service provider, the or each virtual network being set up on a telecommunication network, ~~the method comprising:~~

~~—determining if a software of the client and a predetermined access control protocol for access to the virtual network are compatible,~~

~~- wherein an authentication network is set up on said telecommunication network, said if the software of the client and the predetermined access control protocol are not compatible, authorising data transfer between the client and at least one subscription system for subscribing the client to at least one service provider via an authentication network which is being different from the or each virtual network that allows the client to access the services of the or each service provider,~~

~~- and wherein said authentication network comprises an address server and at least one subscription system for allowing said client to subscribe to said at least one service provider, and wherein, when said software and said predetermined access control protocol are not compatible, the method comprises the following steps:~~

- ~~- said address server transmits to the client an address for accessing said at least one subscription system;~~
- ~~- upon reception of said address, the client accesses said at least one subscription system~~

and subscribes to said at least one service provider;

- upon detection of the subscription of the client, said at least one subscription system transfers if the non-compatible client subscribes to at least one service provider via the authentication network, transferring to the non-compatible client:

an authentication for accessing ~~the virtual network that allows access to~~ the services of the at least one service provider to which the ~~non-compatible~~ client is has subscribed; and

information which makes it possible to make the software of the client compatible with the predetermined access control protocol.

13. (Currently Amended) Digital Subscriber Line Access Multiplexor, which allows at least one client to access ~~the~~ services of at least one service provider, the digital subscriber line access multiplexor being arranged for relaying ~~the~~ information transmitted by the at least one client and associated with authentication of the at least one client to an authentication server, the ~~client~~ digital subscriber line multiplexor including a software module according to the IEEE 802.1x standard for relaying the information associated with the authentication.

14. (Cancelled)

15. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1 wherein the method comprises authenticating ~~authenticates~~ the client to the services of plural service providers via plural virtual networks, and comprises, ~~wherein~~ if the software of the client and the predetermined access control protocol are not compatible, authorising data transfer between the client and plural subscription systems for subscribing the client to plural service providers via the authentication network that allows the client to access the services of each service provider.

16. (Currently Amended) The system of claim 11 wherein the system is arranged for accessing plural virtual networks for allowing the client to access plural service providers and each virtual network is set up on the telecommunication network, wherein: (a) the authorisation means is arranged for subscription systems, (b) the subscribing means is arranged for subscribing plural service providers via the network, and (c) the transfer means is arranged for transferring to the ~~new-compatible~~ client authentication for accessing the plural service providers, if the ~~non-compatible~~ client subscribes to the plural service providers.